

dependence on foreign oil. Despite our country's increasing demand for fuel, the United States has not built an oil refinery in over 30 years. Total capacity of current refineries is roughly 17 million barrels per day, while demand is nearly 21 million barrels per day.

We cannot continue this trend of using more refined petroleum products than we produce. It is vital that we move away from our dependence on foreign sources to fill this gap. I am pleased that this week's long overdue legislation helps remove red tape preventing construction of new refineries.

House Republicans have also taken other actions to ban price gouging, promote conservation efforts, reduce the cost of energy, encourage the use of alternative power sources and improve our electricity transmission capability.

Republicans have also repeatedly supported legislation to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas exploration.

And the Democrats? They have voted "no" on nearly every measure that would offer relief to hardworking Americans.

#### THE CASE FOR LEAVING IRAQ

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Hussein is in jail. Zarqawi is dead. Now we should leave Iraq.

Zarqawi represented a small portion of a large and growing anti-American insurgency in Iraq, a sliver of the non-Baathist insurgency while Baathists make up a majority of armed insurgents. So his killing is unlikely to end the violence in Iraq.

Those who say we must prevail until victory are not themselves paying the price. Nearly 2,500 Americans dead, over 10,000 innocent Iraqis dead, our national honor tainted by a false case for war, Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo, Haditha. When will we understand that you can bomb the world to pieces, but you can't bomb the world to peace?

#### DESERT OUTLAW

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, this morning, freedom has found a victory. Like the days of the Old West, an outlaw has been eliminated and we can take down the wanted posters.

We weren't looking for a bank robber, a railroad bandit or even a horse thief. We were tracking a terrorist, a war criminal. High-tech helped find his hideout.

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, militant mas-terminator who planned and ordered hundreds of bombings, kidnappings and beheadings of Iraqis and Americans, is dead. The prince of the forces of evil, the most wanted man in the desert of

destruction, died like the outlaw that he was. He wasn't hung at the courthouse square like the days of the Old West, but he was the recipient of a U.S. military air strike, a strike that all but wiped out his desert gang of bad men, cutthroats and outlaws.

But like the days of the Old West, there are more outlaws in hideouts in the hot hills of Iraq, and they, too, will be brought to a fitting end. Their reign of terror will be brought to justice.

Freedom must always fight to survive, but freedom will prevail when the desert dust settles.

And that's just the way it is.

#### VA MUST RESPOND APPROPRIATELY TO ID THEFT

(Mr. COSTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, this body and the American public should be outraged by the continuing reports of the theft of personal identification of America's finest, our veterans and our brave men and women who are serving in uniform today here at home and abroad.

As a result of the Department of Veterans Affairs incompetence, the well-being of millions of our military families has been compromised today.

Congress must act now to provide appropriate oversight. I have worked with my colleagues to demand accountability and full disclosure of the VA. I support my friend Congressman SALAZAR's legislation to provide veterans credit monitoring services. I have joined with those who demand that not one penny of the funding to pay for the VA's debacle be diverted from veterans health care or other sorely needed services.

The House must demand more of the Veterans Administration than its unacceptable response of hand-wringing and wrist-slapping. We owe our veterans and our active military personnel nothing less than to respond appropriately.

#### FUND THE BYRNE-JAG GRANTS

(Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, at a time when 80 percent or more of the meth in this country is pouring in from international superlabs like those in Mexico, the Federal Government has a duty to help local law enforcement to keep this poison off our streets. That is why I cannot understand why some, including the administration, would propose to eliminate the Byrne-JAG program.

For those of us that represent highly rural and exurban districts, these vital grants and the police officers that they support are critical to efforts to keep drugs out of our communities and away from our children.

Last year, the Byrne-JAG program took a significant hit, despite our best efforts. The effect was predictable. Many States had to cut or eliminate their drug task force.

We cannot afford these cuts again. We must fund the Byrne-JAG program at no less than \$900 million in FY 07.

#### QUESTIONING THE STRENGTH OF THE ECONOMY

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues like to say the economy is "robust." But for middle-class families it's the best of times, it's the worst of times. While the gross domestic product increases, Americans are drowning in a sea of debt in this wageless recovery.

New data released by the Federal Reserve today indicated that household debt grew at a faster rate in the first quarter of this year than in the previous quarter. Why is it increasing? Because middle-class families are taking on more debt just to make ends meet.

Wages in 2006 were actually lower than they were in November of 2001 when the recovery began. Monthly job growth is a measly 0.4 percent since March 2001, the weakest of any business cycle since World War II. At the same time, the cost for gasoline is up, tuition is up 38 percent, health care premiums have increased 73 percent.

What is the end result? America has a negative savings rate.

Mr. Speaker, my Republican colleagues like to say the economy is booming, and that is certainly true for the credit card companies. But for middle-class families, these are hardly the best of times.

It is time for a change. It is time for a new direction.

#### AL-ZARQAWI IS DEAD

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate our United States military for eliminating a ruthless and brutal terrorist in Iraq.

Late Wednesday night, it was announced that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaeda's leader in Iraq, had been killed in an air raid. This is a tremendous victory in our war on terrorism and a tremendous day for the Iraqi people. In fact, the air strike resulted from tips given to Iraqi Security Forces by residents in Diyala.

Mr. Speaker, al-Zarqawi was responsible for an untold number of bombings and kidnappings. He is even believed to have personally beheaded two American hostages. His death lets our enemies know we will not bow to their ruthless tactics.

America, our allies and the Iraqi people are committed to the triumph of liberty over terrorism.